A Nightmare™ ON ELM STREET 5

THE DREAM CHILD

A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET V:

The Dream Child

an original screenplay
by
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Courtesy of Nightmare on Elm Street Companion

www.nightmareonelmstreetfilms.com

OPEN WITH BLACKNESS

SUPER QUOTE, in blood-red script:

> "Even a child is known by his doings."
> --Old Testament, Proverbs, xx, 11.

Underneath it comes the sound of syncopated THUNDEROUS BOOMS, echoing and unnerving as a gigantic heartbeat.

FADE UP:

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dark and still as the thunderous booming continues, muted and distant.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

ALICE is sleeping, curled into the bunched pillows and billowing comforter on her bed. The booming sound grows louder.

INT. ALICE'S BATHROOM -- NIGHT

The CAMERA MOVES IN to reveal the source of the mysterious sound: the BATHROOM SINK. Super close-up of the DROPS OF WATER, falling in slo-mo.

Suddenly, FREDDY'S LEERING FACE rises on the surface of the water, in the moment before the next drops strike.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DREAM POOL --. NIGHT

Alice floats beneath the surface of the dark water, a modern Sleeping Beauty: her long red hair and white nightgown billowing, her features at rest. DROPS OF WATER slowly strike the surface of the pool, causing ripples and the thundering sounds we hear.

Suddenly, Alice is PITCHED from the pool by some unseen force, awake and terrified.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ASYLUM -- CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Alice lands painfully on the cold concrete of the corridor floor. The booming surrounds her now, along with the sound of lunatic shouting: the corridor is lined with cell doors, behind which a HUNDRED MANIACS howl.

At the end of the hall, young AMANDA KRUEGER is toting a mop and bucket. She pauses to unlock the exit door, then turns.

Suddenly, a HAND REACHES OUT for her hair, missing by an inch. As she staggers back, terrified, she falls into the grip of ANOTHER MANIAC, reaching between the bars to take her by the throat.

She breaks away, stumbles and backs even further down the corridor, away from the exit, as DOZENS OF CLUTCHING HANDS now thrust out of door after door, stretching out into infinity, blocking her escape. She starts to run down the corridor, on a collision course with Alice.

Alice, still kneeling on the floor, throws hers hands up defensively, and Amanda magically RUNS RIGHT THROUGH HER. Alice feels the effect of the SUPERNATURAL CONTACT instantly, yet Amanda seems oblivious; she is trapped in this dream, doomed to repeat it forever. Alice is only an spectral voyeur.

Amanda stops and turns, looking back in terror at the corridor. Suddenly, a DOZEN INMATES loom behind her.

ALICE
(screaming)
Look out!!

The inmates GRAB Amanda by every limb, drag her screaming to the floor, swarming over her, tearing her clothes.

DISTORTED POV-- AMANDA

as the FIRST MANIAC drools down upon her. She screams up at the LEERING FACE.

CUT TO:

INT. -- ALICE'S BEDROOM-- NIGHT

She wakes up, gasping and sweat-sheened, clutching at the covers. Beside her, DAN JORDAN stirs and awakens.

DAN
(sleepily)
Alice? What is it, babe? Another bad dream?

ALICE
(wired, distracted)
Uh-huh. . .

Dan sidles over and snuggles into her. His face is concerned.

DAN
You've been having a lot of them lately.

ALICE
I know.

DAN
He's gone, Alice. You've got to believe that.

Alice does not looks convinced, but she allows Dan to pull her back down and hold her close.

DAN
Don't worry. I've got just the thing to cheer you up. . .

He caresses and kisses her tenderly. She reciprocates for a moment, then turns her head away, still worried. He continues to kiss her neck, and it's clear that he's getting a little worked up.

ALICE
Dan. . .

He responds by kissing her harder, then starting to roll on top of her. She's surprised, and a little annoyed by his insensitivity. She turns her face to him.

ALICE
Dan. . .

CUT TO:

POV ALICE -- INT. ASYLUM CORRIDOR -- NIGHTMARE

Dan's face looms above her, drooling and leering, mirror image of the first lunatic that mounted Amanda, as FREDDY'S LAUGHTER and the roar of the hundred maniacs echoes in the background.

CUT TO:

INT. -- ALICE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Alice sits bolt upright in bed, awake for real this time. No maniacs. No Dan. Just Alice: alone, and afraid.

ALICE

Oh, God.

(steeling herself)

Get ready for it.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET -- DAY

ROLL CREDITS over super-close ups of charcoal on paper as someone draws FREDDY'S HOUSE, against a pumping rock background track. Intercut close-ups of the artist, JEN VALDEZ, a bright and quirky hispanic girl, and closeups of RUSTY, a neighborhood dog who is busily sniffing along as he makes pitstops at a series of posts along the sidewalk.

Jen is absorbed in her work-in-progress when Rusty comes loping up, nudging her drawing arm, vying for attention. She pulls off her Walkman headphones and the theme music dims, becoming the music on her tape. She shooes him away.

JEN

Buzz off, Rusty! I'm working! Do your people know you're sniffing around here?

Rusty lopes off toward the front porch. He goes up the steps to the front door, sniffing.

Suddenly, a DEISEL ROAR superimposes itself and a BULLDOZER comes RAMMING through the front door. Rusty runs off, yipping. The CAMERA PULLS BACK to see that Jen's easel is set up by a large

Condemned sign. Pull back further to see a larger sign looming in the foreground, proclaiming Coming Soon: The Elm St. Mall.

JEN
(to herself)
And that's what they call progress. . .

Suddenly, a brand new 4X4 pulls up behind her. Dan is at the wheel, Alice is in the middle, and GINGER BECKER rides shotgun. Ginger's a bleach-blond punk Norma Jean, masking her vulnerability in leather and black lace. Even her voice is purest Marilyn.

GINGER
Jen, you are so crazy! Your mother said we would find you here.

JEN
Ginger. Relax, okay?

GINGER
I guess graduation isn't all that important. . .

JEN
I just wanted to catch it before it all went down.

The bulldozer CRUSHES the facade of the house.

DAN
Guess you can go now.

Jen shrugs and begins to pack her things. Dan rolls his eyes and drums his fingers on the wheel. Alice surveys the wreckage, troubled and distant, shaking her head.

JEN
It's kind of like the end of an era, you know?

ALICE
Good riddance.

DAN
Hey. It's ancient history now. Let's go.

Alice looks at Dan; Dan gives her a sympathetic squeeze. Jen and Rusty jump in the back, and the truck takes off. As they go, Alice can't help but stare back through the window as Freddy's house goes down, once and for all.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINGWOOD HIGH SCHOOL -- PARKING LOT -- DAY

The lot is awash in caps and gowns and the flurry of pre-graduation excitement. Dan parks the truck, and they all pile out. Just then, DEAN WOODYARD'S battered dirt-bike screeches to a halt beside them. Dean is black and tres cool, decked out in acid-washed, shredded jeans beneath his gown. He shakes his long braids back from under his cap and beams.

DEAN
(gesturing grandly)
Check it out, dudes and dudettes! Is this the apex of modern civilization, or what?

JEN
What?

GINGER
(sardonically)
God help us all. . .

EXT. SPRINGWOOD HIGH FOOTBALL FIELD -- DAY

GRADUATION CEREMONIES are drawing to a close, rife with pomp and circumstance. The principal's voice booms out over the crowd as the last student descends the stairs, diploma in hand.

PRINCIPAL
...and as you leave these halls, I'm sure that you will each meet the challenges of tomorrow with confidence and maturity...

The seated students clutch their diplomas, looking alternately bored and antsy. Dean amuses himself by blowing his tassle out of his face, making it appear to levitate. Jen nudges him to keep from laughing. Ginger can't help herself. Dan is attentive, while Alice seems pensive, preoccupied, as the principal concludes.

PRINCIPAL
(CONT.)
...and I am certain a bright future lays ahead for each and every graduate of Springwood High. Springwood is proud of its children, for each of you forms a vital link between our past and our future. Congratulations, one and all!

A thousand caps soar into the air as the graduates celebrate their liberation. Their parents come over to congratulate them; Dan picks Alice up and spins her around exuberantly, and the whole gang joyously jostles together.

All but Dean, who has no parent rushing over. After the friends hug, he stands back and looks at the sky, kind of sad. Alice looks at him, then turns to Dan.

ALICE
Jesus. Poor Dean...

DAN
(angrily)
Yeah, graduation day and his dad doesn't even bother to show up.

ALICE
I can't believe that people could treat their kids like that.

DAN
Yeah, well, a lot of people don't give a shit about their kids.
(beat)
We'll just have to show him a good time at the party. He'll be okay. He always is.

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- EVENING

Several carloads of partying graduates cruise up the long winding road that leads to Dan Jordan's house. They race past a sign blocking a fork in the road that warns Danger: Bridge Out. Somebody throws a beer can, hits it dead center. There is merry applause.

CUT TO:

EXT. -- DAN'S BACK YARD -- NIGHT

The GRADUATION PARTY is in full swing: kegs flowing, music blasting, kids dancing in the yard and jumping in and out of the pool. On the patio, MR. and MRS. JORDAN have herded their son Dan into a receiving line of congragulatory parents. Alice, Jen, and Ginger are watching by the elaborate buffet table. Alice looks depressed. Her friends look concerned.

JEN
Alice?

ALICE
I'm okay.

JEN
You don't look okay. Where's Dan?

Alice shrugs.

GINGER
(nibbling)
Don't worry about him. This is his moment of glory. Moments of glory are hard to come by. Mmmm... These are great, but they're sooo fattening.

CUT TO:

INT. JORDAN HOUSE -- UPSTAIRS HALL -- NIGHT

Alice reaches the top of the stairs, the sounds of the party faint behind her, and heads down the hall toward the door at the end. Behind it, we hear running water, and the sudden sound of violent retching.

Suddenly, the hallway seems longer, the closed door farther away; and when a HUGE FREDDY-SHAPED SHADOW moves across the wall, her fists ball up and her eyes go wide with apprehension. She reels as if trying very hard not to faint.

ALICE
(whispering)
I'm okay. . .

She takes another step forward and sees that the shadow comes from a spider plant hanging in the open window, stirring in the breeze, backlit from the patio floods. She reaches the bathroom door, turns the knob with shaky fingers, and goes inside.

CUT TO:

INT. JORDAN HOUSE -- UPSTAIRS BATHROOM -- NIGHT

Ginger is on her knees in front of the toilet, sticking a finger down her throat. Water is blasting in the sink. Ginger looks up, horrified, as the door opens and a stunned Alice stares at her.

GINGER

Jesus!

ALICE

(backing out)

Excuse me...

CUT TO:

EXT. DAN'S BACK YARD -- NIGHT

Alice and Jen are standing by the back door, the party still raging around them. Jen can't believe that Alice is surprised.

JEN

You mean you didn't know she was bulemic, either?

ALICE

It's news to me. How long's she been that way?

JEN

Beats me. I found out after we moved in together. She's absolutely terrified of getting fat.

ALICE

(shaking her head)

That's really sad.

JEN

I'll say. That girl probably spends half her life with her finger down her throat.

(beat)

That's what I like about being an artist. You don't have to look good to be great.

Ginger comes out the back door, looking red-eyed and puffy and horribly embarrassed. Alice is embarrassed, too; they avoid eye contact.

GINGER
Guess I just had a little too much to drink. . .

ALICE
Uh huh. . .

JEN
All better now?

Ginger throws her a nasty glance.

DEAN (O.S.)
Ladies. . .

Dean strides up to them, swigging beer and grinning at each girl in turn. Then he focuses on Ginger as a new song begins.

DEAN
Excuse me, my sweet, but may I have the next dance?

GINGER
(curtseying)
Enchanted, I'm sure.

Ginger and Dean move to the center of the dancing teens, then erupt in a very hot dance routine. Dean is good, but Ginger is astounding. It's clear that she's in her element: the others clear a circle around them, then stand and applaud her moves.

Dan moves up to drape an arm around Alice's shoulder. Jen takes a step away, as all three of them watch the dance.

DAN
Damn, she's hot.

ALICE
I worry about her sometimes, though. You know?

JEN

I worry about that Buddy guy that's sleazing around her.

(sarcastic)

Her "manager".

DAN

You never know. He could be her ticket out of here.

JEN

(unconvinced)

Uh-huh. If he's so well-connected, what's he doing in Springwood?

DAN

Look, I had football scouts from all over the country coming out to look at me.

JEN

That's different. . .

DAN

Well, hell, Jen. I don't know. But if he can get her a shot at Hollywood, that'll be so cool. Can you imagine seeing Ginger in the movies?

ALICE

(smiling)

I can see her now. Jason's next victim in Friday the 13th, Part 13: The Redundancy.

JEN

Starring Ginger Becker. Great. . .

The song ends; Ginger caps it with a flourish, then bows to the applauding crowd. With all eyes upon her, she is in her glory.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DAN'S BACK YARD -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Most of the cars and people are gone, and the music has stopped. Alice, Dan, Ginger, Dean and Jen convene at the picnic table, and Dean starts tapping one last round from the keg. He's got a sizeable buzz on already, as he hoists his mug to the group.

DEAN
Get ready, boys and girls, 'cause Mean Dean is about to offer you the toast with the most. Raise your glasses!

GINGER
Dean, I can't. . .

DEAN
Oh, but you must!

DAN
It's not just a good idea. . .

EVERYONE
(in unison)
It's the law!

GINGER
(smiling, resigned)
Okay, okay. Peer pressure is a terrible thing.

She lifts her glass. The others join her. Dean stands to address them all, mocking the pompous tone of the graduation ceremony.

DEAN
Today, children, we are free!
(cheers all around)
After twelve grueling years of being ground down, jerked around, programmed, flim-flammed and bamboozled into obedience by our elders and betters, we are free!

Everyone starts to toast, but Dean is just getting cranked.

DEAN
(CONT)
Yes indeedee! Free to take our rightful place in society! Free to join the Great American rat race, rolling happily along on the conveyor belt that will eventually feed us face-first into the Big Meat-grinder of Life!

JEN
I'm not so sure I like this speech.

DAN
Yeah. Lighten up, son. What's the point?

DEAN
(serious now)
The point is that ninety-nine percent of the people we graduated with will end up turning into their parents. They're gonna murder their dreams, one day at a time, until they wake up twenty years from now with a house and two cars and three kids and a boring job and a boring marriage and a big fat midlife crisis, and they're never even gonna know what hit them.
(beat)
And that scares me more than just about anything I know.

He looks around solemnly, swelling with drunken earnest.

DEAN
(maudlin)
So promise me something. Promise me that you're gonna beat the odds and hang on to your dreams. Don't let anybody take 'em away. You do that.
(beat)
Or so help me, I'm gonna come' round and kick your sorry ass.

He drains his cup, and then continues the motion as he falls flat on his back, stone cold unconscious.

DAN
(raising his cup)
I'll drink to that.

The others laugh and echo the gesture.

CUT TO:

EXT. -- ALICE'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

as Dan's truck pulls up. Alice is quiet. Dan shuts off the engine, and turns to her.

DAN
So here we are. Free at last.

ALICE
Uh-huh. Sure.

Dan watches her, trying to gauge her feelings. Finally, he speaks.

DAN
You know, you've been acting weird for weeks now. Something's eating at you. You want to tell me about it? I mean, telepathy isn't one of my stronger points.

ALICE
I don't know. It's nothing.

DAN
Hey, c'mon! What's going on here?

ALICE
Nothing. I don't know.
(beat)
I'm just a little late, is all.

DAN
Late?

ALICE
You know...late.

Dan thinks about for a beat, then it dawns on him.

DAN

Oh, shit...are you sure?

ALICE

(blurting it out)

I'm not sure about anything! I mean, what if I am? What then? You're going off to college in the fall, and I'll be staying here, and things will change, and I'm afraid that...

Dan reaches out to touch her. She stops.

DAN

Hey, one thing doesn't change.

He kisses her.

FADE TO:

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Alice and Dan curl up in the bed, drifting off to sleep. As her breathing deepens, the beat returns, a deep double-boom in counterpoint with a tiny bell-like echo, like two hearts beating in a symphony of sleep. ZOOM IN on Alice.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S BODY -- NIGHTMARE

The heartbeat thunders as we HURTLE through the body, the TRANSLUCENT WALLS of her VEINS pulsing with life. We travel through a seeming infinity of labyrinthine tubing, when suddenly the walls give way as we enter ALICE'S WOMB, an ENORMOUS CHAMBER, in the middle of which floats the EMBRYO.

Suddenly, the embryo TURNS, begins to GROW at an amazing rate, becoming a FETUS. Tiny legs sprout, the FACE develops recognizably human features. Its BUD-LIKE ARMS develop into hands.

And the FINGERS ELONGATE, beyond mere human dimensions, becoming SHINY, METAL BLADES.

The fetus turns toward the camera, revealing its FREDDY-LIKE FACE. Its lips curl into a smile, and it THRUSTS its blade-hand into the WALL of the WOMB.

CUT TO:

INT. -- HOSPITAL -- NIGHTMARE

Alice "wakes up" clutching her belly in phantom agony. Then the pain vanishes, and she finds herself in an old-fashioned hospital bed, in the middle of a long-emptied ward.

A woman's cries rise nearby. Alice sits up. The cries become distinct, clearly emanating from the hallway. Alice gets up and moves toward the sound.

INT. -- THE HOSPITAL CORRIDOR

Alice looks toward the end of the hall, and sees a young woman standing there, completely silent, dressed in flowing white robes. The woman STARES at her. Suddenly FOUR BLOOD-SPOTS appear on her tunic, begin to GROW AND SPREAD. Before Alice can say anything, the woman turns and walks through an open doorway.

ALICE

No, wait!

Alice keeps moving, toward the cries, until she enters the doorway.

INT. THE LAB -- NIGHTMARE

All tubes and beakers and musty apparatus, surrounded by a vast dusty library. Alice walks in, see a row of large specimen jars. At the end of the row is the TOP HALF OF FREDDY'S HEAD (remnant from Freddy's destruction in NOES IV), floating in an oily, viscous liquid. As Alice examines it more closely, the EYES POP OPEN, staring at her. She gasps, and turns around.

INT. -- THE MATERNITY WARD -- NIGHTMARE

A nightmarish birth is in progress: young Amanda Krueger in the throes of labor, screaming incomprehensibly, while stoic midwife-nuns preside over her agony.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
Abomination! The child is evil.

There is a BLOOD-CURDLING SHRIEK. As Alice watches in horror, Amanda gives birth, the life draining out of her as she becomes dessicated, corpse-like.

The nuns flee in genuflecting terror as her SWOLLEN BELLY CRACKLES, its robes stretching almost to the bursting point before the four blood-spots reappear, this time followed by FREDDY'S BLADES. He EMERGES full-blown from the SMOKING CESEREAN of his dying mother's womb, clawing his way through the crusty placenta. He is, alas, missing the top half of his head.

Freddy's body walks over to the specimen jar, reaches in, and GRASPS the top of his head. He put it on, turns to Alice, and smiles.

FREDDY
It's a boy!

Alice shrieks and runs through the lab, and as she does, the beakers start to FILL UP with BLOODY GOO. She hears Freddy laughing, and sees that the goo has turned into SCREAMING, BLOODY FETUSES, writhing in their glass prisons.

Freddy comes in, looks at the screaming fetuses and taps his forefinger blade against one of the jars.

FREDDY
(chuckling)
Coochie-coochie-coo! Come to Poppa...

ALICE
I beat you, you bastard! I sent you to hell!

Freddy runs his glove across the stacks of books, pulling a thick dusty volume from one of the shelves. He flips it open.

FREDDY
Hell...it's a nice place to visit. But I wouldn't want to live there.
(beat)
I told you before. I am eternal. I'm a part of you.

Freddy chucks the book.

FREDDY
(CONT.)
You think, therefore I am.

Alice turns and runs, further and further into the stacks, until she runs into a dead end. She's trapped. Freddy chuckles behind her, low and menacing. She turns and faces him defiantly.

ALICE
You just go ahead and kill me, Krueger. You're not getting anyone out of me this time!

FREDDY
(chuckles)
That's what you think. I've got plans for you...
(beat)
...and it all starts right here.

He reaches out and lightly touches her belly with his forefinger blade. The blade SPARKS, and Alice goes rigid, as if she just touched a high-voltage power line. He smiles.

FREDDY
Ahhhhh...that hits the spot.

He withdraws the blade and Alice collapses, sickly reeling.

ALICE
What did you do to me?

FREDDY
Not you. Junior there.
(pointing to her womb)
He's my little piggy now!

He lunges at her and Alice screams.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

as she wakes up, terrified. A SUDDEN RUSH hits her; she gets up, lurches into the bathroom, and heaves.

ALICE

Oh no... oh no...

CUT TO:

INT. -- JOHNSON HOUSE-- MORNING

Dan comes in, carrying a Revco bag. Alice kisses him, then practically snatches the bag from his hands.

ALICE

Did you get them?

DAN

I practically cleaned out the drugstore. Now what?

Alice dumps the contents on the counter, as every conceivable brand of EARLY PREGNANCY TEST comes spilling out in a heap on the counter. Alice holds one box up, reading the instructions. Then she scoops up the bundle.

ALICE

C'mon.

INT. BATHROOM -- DAY

Beakers and vials sprawl across the counter. Dan pokes his head in the door.

DAN

Jeez, it looks like Frankenstein's laborotory in here.

ALICE

Very funny.

DAN

What do you want me to do now?

ALICE
Cross your fingers, and wait outside.

She shuts the bathroom door in his face.

CUT TO:

INT. -- HALLWAY -- DAY

Dan paces, waiting. The bathroom door opens again. Alice stands there, trembling.

DAN
Well? Is it good news or bad news?

ALICE
You tell me...Dad.

Dan looks at her for a moment, then they embrace.

ALICE
I'm scared.

DAN
(hugging her tight)
Me, too.

CUT TO:

INT. -- JEN AND GINGER'S APARTMENT-- DAY

It's a funky loft-style apartment that they share. Jen's artwork is prominently displayed: the Freddy's house drawing, a couple of surreal paintings, a number of odd clay busts and sculptures, and one massive metal sculpture of vaguely human shape. Alice sits by Jen's potter's wheel as Jen works with an acetylene torch , welding a large, vaguely human abstract sculpture.

JEN
Jesus, Alice. Pregnant? Are you sure?

ALICE
I only took about a dozen tests.

GINGER

Well, we've got to take care of you right away. I know a clinic that can take do you practically on the spot.

ALICE

(startled)

Excuse me?

GINGER

Well, you're not actually thinking of keeping it, are you? I'm serious. You're too young to have a baby, for God's sake.

JEN

Jesus, Ginger, don't you think this is Alice's decision?

GINGER

Well, excuse me for trying to help!

Alice gets up abruptly, moves to the artwork on the outskirts of the room. Her friends are jogged into silence. Alice pauses at the drawing of Freddy's house, stares at it intently.

ALICE

I've had too much death in my life already. My mother, my brother, and way too many friends.

(beat)

I can't even think about abortion right now.

Jen nods. Ginger purses her lips and says nothing, sadness in her eyes.

ALICE

(CONT.)

But I'm scared. I'm really, really scared.

(beat)

And to make matters worse, I've been dreaming again...

JEN

Oh, no.

GINGER
What, you mean that guy dreams?

Alice nods.

JEN
Okay. But let's think about this. How long have you been having these dreams?

ALICE
(still staring)
I don't know. About a month, maybe.

JEN
Okay. That's probably about how long you've been pregnant.

GINGER
So?

JEN
So it could be just pregnancy-related stress, you know? Your subconscious, freaking out...

ALICE
(turning, intense)
Let me put it to you this way, okay? When I dream about Mel Gibson, it's just a dream. When I dream about Freddy Krueger, it's not just a dream. I take it very seriously.

JEN
(backing off)
Okay. Okay. So you're saying what?

ALICE
Watch each other. Sleep in shifts. If something even starts to seem to go wrong, wake each other up.

GINGER
(nervous)
You're really serious, aren't you?

ALICE
I couldn't be more serious.

JEN
Okay, that's us. But what about Dan?

Alice looks away, her gaze distant and frightened again.

ALICE
I don't know...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINGWOOD HILLS -- DAY

Dan and Dean are DIRT-BIKE RIDING through the hills outside Springwood. They both know what they're doing, but Dan's edge seems a little off; Dean whips him up and down the trails pretty consistently.

They pause at a point where the trail meets the road to town, right near the sign saying DANGER: BRIDGE OUT.

DAN
We should be heading back.

Dean sees the sign and his eyes light up. He smiles.

DEAN
I know a shortcut.

DAN
Say what?

DEAN
C'mon, son, let's take a ride on the wild side...

He takes off, heading down the road. Dan reluctantly follows. The road is narrow and badly paved, and it twists and turns wildly. They take a last turn and the road straightens out, heading toward the washed out BRIDGE. Dan guns his cycle and heads right for the abyss.

DAN
(shouting over the noise)
Where are you going?

DEAN
Trust me!

At the last possible second Dean turns and cuts down a trail at the lip of the bridge. Dan's control isn't quite as precise, and he misses the turn, sliding to a stop at the last second. A few stones trickle over the lip of the fallen bridge as he peers over the edge. It's a long way down.

DAN
Holy fuck!

Then he hears Dean's laughter as he rides away. Dan revs his bike, and takes off after him.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK ROAD -- DAY

They pull up beside Dan's truck. Dan and Dean dismount, take off their helmets.

DEAN
Yow! That was radical, dude.

DAN
If you like suicide, sure.

DEAN
Hey, lighten up. Life is not without a particle of risk. Besides, it's Miller time.

Dean grabs a couple of beers out of the cooler chest in the back of the truck and tosses one to Dan. Dean takes a hefty swig, while Dan only sips at his. Dean looks at him reprovingly.

DEAN
Daniel, why aren't we going for the gusto? Do we have a big bug up our butt?

DAN
I dunno. Got a lot on my mind, I guess.

He takes a half-hearted swig.

DAN
(CONT)
Hey, bud, can I talk to you?

DEAN
(facitiously)
Well, gee, lemme see...you're only about the best friend I got since moving to this bohunk cowtown, and I know you better than your own momma... I'd say that qualifies as a big 'yes'.
(seriously)
Fire at will, son.

DAN
I've got a problem.

DEAN
You're telling me.

DAN
Alice is pregnant.

DEAN
Whoa.
(beat)
Bummer. So you gonna hose the little unit, or what?

DAN
(curt)
That's real sensitive, Dean. Thanks a lot.

DEAN
I'm sorry, man. Seriously. So, what now?

Dan takes an angry swig off his beer and sighs.

DAN
I don't know what to do. Part of me wants to tell her to just get rid of it, like I just want it out of my life.
(beat)
But part of me actually wants it. I mean, I really love her. Go figure.

DEAN
Major dilemna, dude. Have you told your folks yet?

DAN
No. Somehow I don't think they're gonna take it very well. Shit, I've got a full scholarship at State in the fall and a real shot at making all-American. I've got my whole life ahead of me! How the hell am I supposed to throw all that away and raise a family?

DEAN
Yeah, what are we talking about here? Play football for a couple of years, then grab your degree and go out an' cop some suckass desk job that don't mean shit to you.
(beat)
You ask me, you got your priorities ass-backwards. That stuff don't mean dick, if you love each other enough.

They finish their beers, toss the cans in the back and climb in the cab. Dan fires it up and pulls away, heading back toward town.

CUT TO:

INT. -- DAN'S TRUCK -- AFTERNOON

DAN
Yeah, but what about my folks?

DEAN
Hey, worst case, what could happen?

DAN
They'll kill me.

DEAN
Yeah, that's a risk.
(beat)
If they do, can I have your truck?

CUT TO:

EXT. DAN'S HOUSE -- EVENING

It's a very plush upper-middle class abode in one of Springwood's "better" neighborhoods. Dan's truck is parked outside, the dirtbike still strapped on the back. A very tense conversation is going on inside.

MRS JORDAN (V.O.)
I simply can't believe what I'm hearing, Daniel. Pregnant? You got a girl pregnant? Whatever happened to safe sex?

CUT TO:

INT. DAN'S KITCHEN -- EVENING

where he roots through the refrigerator, pointedly avoiding his parents' stinging gaze.

DAN
Is there any more beer?

He finds one and pops it open.

MRS. JORDAN
Dan! I swear, it's like I don't know you anymore. Ever since you met that girl...

DAN
It's not just "a girl", Mom. Her name is Alice...

MRS. JORDAN
I know perfectly well what her name is, young man! In fact , we know all about her...

DAN
What's that supposed to mean?

MR. JORDAN
(softer, interceding)
It means that we'd hoped you would have exercised a little better judgement.

MR. JORDAN
Really, Daniel, a girl with a history of mental instability!

DAN
What?!

MRS. JORDAN
Oh, Dan! I'm don't want to fight. But everyone knows about Alice Johnson's hallucinations. Now I've never said a thing against you dating her. But as mother of my grandchild...

Dan's mom looks all teary-eyed for a moment; Dan's dad places his arm around her shoulder in a comforting gesture.

MR. JORDAN
(to Dan)
What your mother's trying to say, son, is that we're just thinking of you future here...

Dan stares at his parents, utterly dumbfounded.

DAN
My future...

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S BATHROOM -- EVENING

Alice stares at the littered result of the E.P.T.s, feeling overwhelmed and more than a little depressed. She empties the beakers into the toilet, one by one, then throws them into the trash.

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- EVENING

On her bed, crying quietly to herself. She looks at the FAMILY PICTURE, sees her late MOTHER: happy, smiling, holding young Alice. Alice touches the surface of the glass, beating back the tears.

ALICE
(whispering)
What do I do now, momma? What do I do?

FREDDY (V.O.)
(chuckling)
Why don't you just lay back and enjoy it?

Alice turns around and sees Freddy in the mirror. She gasps and drops the picture, which goes spinning toward the floor in slo-mo. As it hits the floor it SHATTERS, spreading five cracks that resemble FREDDY'S HAND, directly over the image of Alice's mother.

Suddenly, Alice's legs are yanked out from under her. She lands on her back on the bed, and her skirt starts sliding up her legs, as if by INVISIBLE HANDS. She fights to pull it back down, as Freddy's reflection laughs maniacally.

Suddenly the PHONE RINGS.

Alice wakes up, startled. The hallucination is gone, and Alice finds herself staring at her own reflection. The phone RINGS again.

ALICE
Huh...?

The phone RINGS again.

CUT TO:

INT. DAN'S HOUSE -- NIGHT

Dan's parents fret and stew in the living room, as Dan stands in the kitchen, the phone pressed to his ear. Alice picks up on the other end.

ALICE (V.O.)
Hello...?

DAN
Alice? Listen, I've been thinking, and...

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

as she cups the phone to her ear, still slightly dazed.

DAN (V.O.)
...I love you, Alice. That's all that matters.
We'll work this thing out, somehow.

ALICE
Oh, Dan...

CUT TO:

INT. JORDAN HOUSE -- NIGHT

as Dan's mother comes in to eavesdrop on his conversation. When Dan sees her, his assurance easily doubles.

ALICE (V.O.)
Are you sure about this?

DAN
(eyeing his mother)
I've never been more sure of anything in my life.

Dan's mother looks taken aback.

DAN
(CONT.)
Yeah, we've got a lot to talk about. I love you Alice.

He hangs up, meeting his mother's gaze defiantly. Then he turns and heads out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S ROOM -- NIGHT

She places the phone back in the cradle. Looking down, she sees the family picture. The glass is unbroken: Mom smiles from the other side. Alice picks up the picture.

ALICE
Everything's gonna be okay...

CUT TO:

EXT. WINDING ROAD -- NIGHT

as Dan's truck speeds downhill, heading toward town, the stereo blasting "Highway to Hell".

INT. DAN'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

Dan yawns hugely; and for a second, his eyes wink shut. Then he shakes himself awake.

DAN

Whoa. . .

He rolls down the window and leans on the accelerator, letting the wind and the adrenalin rush of high speed jolt him back to consciousness.

DAN

(to himself)

C'mon, son. Don't let 'em catch you asleep at the wheel.

He goes to downshift. As he grabs the gearshift lever, it sprouts FREDDY-CLAWS and GRABS HIM BACK. Freddy's face comes pressing out of the dashboard and leers horribly.

FREDDY

Too late!

DAN

Jesus Christ. . .!

The claw/shifter forces Dan into a HIGH gear: the truck goes even faster, the speedometer registering 80...90...100. Dan stomps on the brakes, to no avail.

CUT TO:

INT. JOHNSON HOUSE -- NIGHT

Alice stands in the kitchen, making hot water for tea. Suddenly she jolts, as if struck by an unseen force. The pot crashes to the floor, spilling the water everywhere. Alice gasps and looks down into the growing puddle.

Dan's struggle is reflected there.

ALICE

DAN!!

CUT TO:

INT. DAN'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

He fights Freddy for control of the truck. He hears Alice's voice filtering through to him.

DAN
(screaming)
ALICE! HELP!!
(to Freddy)
Stop this truck, you son of a bitch!

FREDDY
(laughing)
Father knows best!

EXT. DAN'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

The brakes suddenly lock up. The truck skids across the road as it approaches the fork that turns off toward town.

INT. DAN'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

Freddy goes nose to nose with Dan.

FREDDY
Take a ride on the wild side, Danny-boy!

EXT. DAN'S TRUCK -- NIGHT

It skids the other way instead, SMASHING into the abuttment that holds the ROAD CLOSED sign, stopping dead in its tracks.

The dirtbike goes FLYING high into the air, tumbling end over end, over the cab of the truck. The windshield SHATTERS as Dan goes hurtling through it. He bounces off the hood and lands on the ground, bleeding from a dozen glass cuts and an ugly gash on his forehead. He is dazed from the concussion, and fights the urge to lose consciousness completely. He looks back: his truck is totaled.

DAN
(to himself)
Oh shit, not again...

His dirtbike lays nearby, its front wheel still spinning. Dan rises painfully and gets on the bike.

DAN
(CONT)
...got to warn Alice.

He kicks the starter, and the bike sputters to life. He shakes his head to clear it.

DAN
You're not getting away with it this time, Krueger.

Dan twists the throttle, and suddenly the bike transforms into a FREDDY-CYCLE: handlebars and footpedals becoming his arms and legs, the speedometer and tach melding together to become Freddy's FACE, which leers at him.

FREDDY
Wanna bet? Time to take a ride on MY side!
Hahahahaha...!

The motorcycle takes off, leaving a burning trail in its wake.

EXT. THE TRAIL -- NIGHTMARE

Dan careens down the trail, the throttle and pedals shifting themselves as the cycle picks up speed. Dan howls as he fights for control, holding on for dear life. He pulls desperately on the brakes, but the calipers become Freddy's blades, SLICING HORRIBLY into his hands. The cycle guns toward the edge of the washed-out bridge. Dan cries out in desperation.

DAN
ALICE!!

FREDDY
You want to see Alice? I know a short cut!

Dan looks up and sees an enormous piece of wrecked steel spanning shaped like Freddy's outstretched claw, LOOMING in front of him. The giant metal claw knocks his body out of the saddle. The dirtbike skids into the abyss, to burst into flames below.

CUT TO:

EXT. BRIDGE -- NIGHT

Dan's body hangs face-down in the wreckage, suspended high above the chasm, bleeding and battered and entagled in the jagged steel. Freddy appears behind him, at the lip of the bridge, pushing on the precarious spanning. Every shove sends Dan deeper into agony.

DAN

Alice...

FREDDY

Tsk tsk...looks like you won't be making that date after all. But don't worry. I'll tell her you got hung up.

Freddy shoves one last time, and a piece of steel punches clear through Dan's chest, IMPALING him.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Alice SCREAMS as she feels Dan's death register inside her.

ALICE

Oh god! Dan!!

She stumbles out the door, fumbling blindly with her keys, and gets in her car.

EXT. STREET -- NIGHT

Alice's car pulls up and she gets out, running toward the accident site. She sees the wreckage of Dan's truck: police investigators pull the empty beer cans out of the back conclusively, as medics wheel a loaded gurney into the ambulance, the sheet covering the body soaked and spattered with blood.

ALICE

Dan!

The police hold her back. As the medics slam the door of the ambulance shut, Alice doubles over in pain. She looks down and sees Freddy, in a puddle on the muddy road.

FREDDY

Hahahahahah...

ALICE

NO...!!!

She collapses to the ground as Freddy's laughter rings out.

FADE TO:

DAN'S FUNERAL -- DAY

Dan's coffin is lowered into the ground, as his parents stand, inconsolable with grief. There are maybe fifty people there: relatives, friends, the entire football team. They are divided pretty completely: family on one side, friends on the other. Alice looks to Dan's family for some acknowledgment of their shared grief. Only one young man on Dan's family's side of the funeral will look at her; he stands off to the side, away from the other relatives. He watches Alice with a quiet intensity.

PRIEST

Ashes to ashes, dust to dust...

The crowd begins to disperse as the first dirt rains down into the grave. Alice, trying hard to hold it together, approaches Dan's mother.

ALICE

Mrs. Jordan, I...

Dan's mother refuses to acknowledge her, face crawling with pain and bitter recriminations. She turns then, leaning into her husband's arms. He holds her close, looks pointedly away from Alice.

MR. JORDAN

I think you should leave now.

Dan's family walks away, leaving Alice awkwardly alone. Dean, Jen and Ginger all gather around her.

ALICE

They won't even talk to me...

JEN
Never mind them. Are you okay?

ALICE
(miserable)
No. Burying the people I love is getting to be a habit.

She looks at Jen, and her composure just crumbles. Jen hugs her, as Alice sobs.

JEN
Let it out, it's okay...we're here for you.

Alice pulls away, reigning her feelings in as best she can.

ALICE
That's what I'm afraid of! It's worse than before. Krueger just keeps coming back for more...
(to Dean)
What were you saying about murdered dreams?

DEAN
(losing it)
Alice, this is bullshit!

GINGER
(whispering, frantic)
Dean! Shut up!

DEAN
I can't shut up! This is wacko! My best friend is dead, dammit, and he didn't need nobody's help to get that way! He fucked up! He got drunk, he got in his truck, and he lost it on the curve! Period! No dreams! No nightmares! No creepy-crawler bullshit! That's it!

ALICE
No, it's not. Freddy's back. He wants me. He wants the baby!

She turns and runs away from the group. Jen starts after her

JEN

Alice, come back!

GINGER

(holding her back)

Let her go, Jen. Give her some space. She'll be okay.

JEN

I'm not so sure.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOUNTAIN, PARK -- DAY

The same one from NOES 4, where Alice made her wish. She sits at the edge of it, alone and in black, looking down into the water. She holds a coin in her hand, as if to make a wish.

ALICE

I should have told you...

She tosses the coin at the water. As it falls, she sees what looks like Dan's reflection in the water, and a male voice comes from behind her.

MYSTERY KID

If you do that, then it won't come true.

The coin hits the water. Alice turns around, startled, and sees that its not Dan at all. Rather, it's the mystery kid from the funeral. He smiles a very wry, sad, inward smile, and the resemblance to Dan is eerie.

MYSTERY KID

Hi. You're Alice, right? I saw you at the funeral. My name's J.J.

ALICE

Are you a relative of Dan's?

J.J.

You could say that. A kind of a distant relative.

(beat)

Listen, I just want to tell you how sorry I am. I know you must feel pretty awful right now.

ALICE

You could say that.

J.J.

Do you wanna talk about it?

ALICE

No. I don't.

She gets up and begins to walk away. He follows her.

J.J.

Are you sure? I can be very understanding.

ALICE

No. Really. I just need to be alone right now.

J.J. stops in his tracks.

J.J.

Well, you know what they say: you're never alone, as long as someone cares.

Alice looks back and smiles sadly. Then she turns and walks away, leaving him there. J.J. watches, and that strange smile flits across his face.

J.J.

I'll see you around!

Alice turns to say something. But J.J. is nowhere to be found.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

Alice is listlessly preparing food, expressionless. Her father is on the phone, fielding her calls. His nerves are frazzled.

MR. JOHNSON
No, she doesn't want to talk to you right now. She doesn't want to talk to anyone.

Alice takes a slab of RAW LIVER out of the fridge, pulling it out of its cellophane wrapping and slaps it on a baking pan. As her dad fields the call, Alice sprinkles some Adolphs's meat tenderizer on it. Then she cuts off a raw hunk, pops it in her mouth and starts to chew. She chomps away for several seconds before realizing what she is doing. She spits it out, disgusted.

MR. JOHNSON
(CONT)
Look. If she wants to talk, she'll call you back. Now, please go away.

He hangs up the phone, then moves to the fridge and pulls out a bottle of Smirnoff's. He puts it on the counter, and then sighs like the weight of the world is on his shoulders.

MR, JOHNSON
Are you okay?

Alice nods. Her father watches her for a second. Then he sighs.

MR. JOHNSON
Jesus, Alice. Pregnant? Why didn't you tell me?

He pours a few fingers worth into a glass, then picks the glass up. He's just about to bring the glass to his lips when he catches the look of pain and pathos in his daughter's eyes.

ALICE
Daddy, don't. Not now...

He hesitates, then lowers the glass. His irritation leaches out of him, leaving a maudlin drunk in its place. He comes over and sits down next to Alice, reaching out to her ineffectually.

MR. JOHNSON
I'm sorry, honey.

ALICE
It's okay.

MR. JOHNSON
I haven't been much of a father to you, have I?

ALICE
You're fine, Dad.

MR. JOHNSON
(practically crying)
No, no, no...I've been terrible. Ever since your mother died, and then Rick...oh, God. I've neglected you, honey, and it's just not right...

Alice, ever the strong one, takes him in her arms.

ALICE
Well, maybe you'll be a better grandfather, you know?

They hug. Then Mr. Johnson looks at her.

MR. JOHNSON
You're probably exhausted. You haven't slept for days.

ALICE
I have my reasons.

MR. JOHNSON
(paternally)
Like hell. That's my grandson you're carrying, and he needs all the help he can get. Now get some rest.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- AFTERNOON

Dad tucks her in and kisses her forehead, as Alice yields to pure exhaustion. As she drifts off, The TWIN HEARTBEATS come back up on the soundtrack.

EXT. ELM STREET -- NIGHTMARE

Alice stands in the middle of an eeirly-empty, picture-perfect Elm Street. She looks down to the end of the street: poised there, squarely in the middle of the intersection, is a frilly white BASINET. It stands there, perfectly innocent, the rising sun golden behind it.

Alice comes up to the crib and looks down, smiling.

Suddenly a FLOATING POV begins tracking down the street, slowly at first, then faster and faster, past all the sleeping houses, racing toward Alice and the basinet.

Alice's expression changes to one of dawning terror, as a BABY'S BLADED HAND thrusts out of the crib. Alice screams, and as she turns to flee, EVERY SINGLE WINDOW on the street EXPLODES outward in a sequential shower of glass, as the inhabitants of ELM STREET go hurtling out to die their immaculate front lawns.

Bloody body parts rain down on the street like gumbo, coating everything in a thick red slime. Thunder booms overhead, and Alice suddenly finds herself standing in the middle of a ghost town: the houses still and ruined, the streets filled with the dead. The tracking shot ZOOMS toward Alice, overtaking her.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- DAY

She jolts awake, still shaking from the nightmare. She gets up. Outside her window, neighborhood children are playing. Alice catches a glimpse of herself in the mirror. Her expression goes chill.

ALICE
No way. No fucking way.
(beat)
I don't know what your game is, but I'm going to find out. If it kills me...

CUT TO:

INT. JEN AND GINGER'S APARTMENT -- AFTERNOON

Jen and Dean kill time in Jen's studio. Jen is talking on the phone.

JEN
Please, Mr. Johnson, it's been four days! I just want to know if she's all right!
(beat)
Well, would you please tell her I called? Thank you. Goodbye.
(under her breath)
Shmuck!
(to Dean)
He says she still isn't seeing anyone.

Dean sits at Jen's potter's wheel, contemplating a lump of unformed clay.

DEAN
Jen, give it a rest. You must have called fifty times already.

JEN
Yeah, well, stay tuned for fifty-one.

DEAN
She wants to be alone.

JEN
She's scared, Dean. She's trying to protect us.

DEAN
C'mon, Jen. You mean you actually believe all that bullshit?

JEN
I don't know. This town has a bigger body count than downtown Beirut. Anyway, she believes it. That's what matters to me.

The door opens, and Ginger comes in. She is dressed to slay, and though she should be radiating confidence, she's as nervous as the others are dead.

GINGER
Well, what do you think? Smash or trash?

DEAN
(distracted)
Smash.

GINGER
That's it? One word?

JEN
I don't see how you can do this now.

GINGER
(defensive)
Hey, look, I'm as sorry about Dan as you are. But life goes on. Tonight's my big audition. Buddy's already got it all set up. I'm not supposed to go, just because...?

JEN
(dismissive)
Whatever. You do what you have to do.

Ginger is about to justify herself when there is a knock on the door. Everyone jumps, and then Jen rolls her eyes.

JEN
Wonder who that could be.

Ginger hustles over to the front door, and opens it. BUDDY FRANCIS is there: tall, dark, and handsome, in his early thirties, with rock star hair and too-cool clothes to match.

BUDDY
Hi, babe. You look fantastic!

He gives her a brotherly peck on the forehead before turning his pearly-white grin on the others.

BUDDY
Hey, there, gang. How's life treating you'?

JEN
Just great. We buried a friend this week.

BUDDY
(unshaken)
Wow. I'm sorry to hear that.
(to Ginger)
You gonna be okay for tonight? 'Cause if you're not...

GINGER
Oh, no. I'll be fine. Really.

BUDDY
You're a trooper, kid. That's the bottom line.
(beat)
You got everything you need?

Ginger picks up a tiny leather ditty bag.

GINGER
Yep, I'm all packed.

BUDDY
(smiling)
Fantastic. Let's go. We don't want to keep these guys waiting.
(to Jen and Dean)
Hang in there, kids. We'll see you later. Sorry about your friend.

JEN
Yeah, right.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT -- AFTERNOON

establishing shot, as Buddy's Porsche pulls up and parks, and he and Ginger head inside.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Ginger and Buddy enter the suite; Ginger looks around and sees cameras and videotape equipment set up. The shades are drawn in the room, which is also littered with room service carts and generally looks like a fly-by-night operation. Buddy introduces her to the TWO PRODUCERS, who are actually a couple of pretty sleazy characters. #1 is older, vaguely English and quasi-cultured. #2 is younger, burlier, definitely American.

SLEAZY PRODUCER #1

Such a pleasure to meet you, Ginger. You're everything Buddy said you'd be. We're scouting for fresh faces for our latest picture, and Buddy assured us that you'd be perfect for it.

GINGER

Well, thank you. I brought my resume for you--

S.P.#1 takes the folder, barely glancing at it.

S.P.#1

Excellent! Well, we'd like to get the live audition straight away, so if you'll slip into the other room and change into your swimsuit...

SLEAZY PRODUCER #2

Right this way, babe.

He takes her over to the bathroom and ushers her through the door, as Buddy taps out some blow for S.P. #1.

INT. MOTEL BATHROOM -- AFTERNOON

Ginger holds up the skimpy bikini she brought along, and looks at herself in the mirror, taking a deep breath.

GINGER

(to herself)

This is the big time.

S.P. #1 (O.S.)

We haven't lost you in there, have we, dear?

Ginger drops the bikini and hurriedly unbuttons her blouse.

GINGER

I'm coming.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- AFTERNOON

Ginger emerges from the bathroom, bathed in light and clad in little else. The producers show her over to the makeshift backdrop. S.P. #2 mans the camera as S.P.#1 alternately directs and toots up with Buddy. Buddy slips a tape into a boom box sitting on the table and starts the music.

S.P.#1

Now the part we have you in mind for is one of the most crucial roles in the picture, that of Babette, who is stalked by the killer as she dances in her dorm room. We want to see what you've got, so really turn it on and give it to us.

Ginger starts to dance, stiffly at first, then loosening up a little. The camera's autowinder whirs as the frames fly by.

S.P.#1

Yes, that's it...beautiful......that's it... you're beautiful, darling...now, slowly, peel off the suit...

Ginger stops., and balks. S.P. #1 casts a baleful glance at Buddy, and shuts off the tape.

S.P.#1

(to Buddy)

Buddy, it was my understanding that you had already explained to our star the demanding nature of this role, and the need for a thorough audition. Is there a problem with that?

Buddy regards them apologetically.

BUDDY

(to producers)

Would you excuse us a moment?

He grabs Ginger by the arm and hustles her into the other room. Once there, he plays a one-man good cop/bad cop routine on her, jerking her every which way but loose.

BUDDY

Babe, you were doing great, then you froze up. So what's the problem?

GINGER

I don't know, it's just...nobody said anything about nudity.

BUDDY

What do you mean? I specifically told you they'd be shooting "with and without" the swimsuit, right?. So what did you think I meant?

GINGER

I don't know...I'm sorry, I guess I...

She stops, flustered. Buddy kisses her lightly on the forehead.

BUDDY

It's okay. Jeez, you're such an innocent. But that's why I love you, babe. That's why they want you. You're fresh, and that's beautiful. But you're gonna have to do a lot of things you've never done before, if you want to be a star.

(beat)

And that's show business.

GINGER

I don't know...

BUDDY

Dammit, Ginger! Are you trying to make me look bad? I put myself on the line for you, I told them you were professional! Now are you gonna be a pro, or what?

CUT TO:

POV VIDEO CAMERA

Ginger stands, topless but artfully angled. S.P.#2 stands behind her. The camera zooms in on her face.

S.P. #1

Are we ready? Splendid. Okay, this is a love scene, dear. You're about to be ravaged by the maniac, you're terrified but secretly loving it. Alright? Wipe your nose, dear. That's our girl. You're beautiful. Roll tape!

Close-up on her face, as S.P. #2 starts to grope her. Her eyes are semi-wasted looking, and a tear glistens in the corner of one. She blinks it away.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPRINGWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY -- AFTERNOON

Establishing shot, as Alice goes inside.

INT. LIBRARY -- AFTERNOON

Alice, looking tired and drawn, checks out some microfiche from the records section. Then she plunks down at a reading table and calls up an acetate marked "Springwood Examiner, 1966-68". She starts to skim, fishing for clues with a grim determination.

INT. LIBRARY -- EVENING

Alice is still at it. Dozens of microfiche cards are before her, as well as books on dreams and nightmares, psychology, etc. She scans another acetate, bleary-eyed from too much reading.

CLOSE- UP -- MICROFICHE SCREEN

An article, dated July 16, 1958. The headline reads: "FIRE AT ST. MARY'S KILLS TWENTY, ARSON SUSPECTED". The accompanying picture shows a class photo of the victims, twenty-one grim children presided over by a grim-looking nun. One face toward the back stands out; an angry runt, a pressure-cooker of a child, with a jug-eared face twisted by loneliness and hate into a mask of pure vengeance.

Alice stares at the photo, the gears in her head turning and turning.

Suddenly a heavy book booms down in front of her. Alice practically jumps out of her skin, as J.J. sits down across from her. He, too, looks tired, almost anemic. But the smile, when it comes, is warm and sly and as strong as ever.

J.J.
Hey, stranger. Long time no see.

ALICE
(shocked)
Jesus, you scared me! What the hell are you doing here?

J.J.
Sorry.
(in his best Bullwinkle voice)
Sometimes I don't know my own strength.

Alice is not amused. She resumes scanning.

J.J.
You know, I've never seen you smile. Not even a grin. Nothing. Zip. Nada. What would it take to make you smile?

ALICE
(without looking up)
A miracle. What are you doing here?

J.J.
(ignoring the question)
I haven't seen you around lately. You look tired.

ALICE
(self-consciously)
Yeah, well, I haven't been sleeping lately. And you don't look so hot yourself. Answer my question.

J.J.
I dunno, I thought I might be able to help you find what you're looking for.

He slides the book toward her.

J.J.
Check the section that's marked.

Alice flashes J.J. an exasperated glance.

ALICE
If I do, then will you please go away?

J.J.
Deal. Scout's honor. I'm outtahere.

She looks down at the book. The title embossed on the cover says simply, "The Dream Pool". Alice thumbs to a bookmark, and starts to read: at first simply to appease him, then with growing interest.

ALICE
'...legends and myths on the source of dreams have been with us since the dawn of time. With the advent of modern psychoanalysis came the concept of the dream pool, the place where all dreams, past, present, and future, mingle as one. Just as every river must eventually empty into the sea, each person's dreams ultimately becomes a part of the dream pool...'

She looks up at J.J..

ALICE
(CONT.)
Why are you showing me this?

J.J.
Because it's important. In fact, it's a matter of life or death.

His gaze is level and utterly serious.

J.J.
I know about the dreams, Alice, and I know they're real. And I need to know what's going on just as badly as you do...
(beat)
...because I'm having them, too.

ALICE
What?

J.J.
Ever since Dan... well, every night. Like clockwork. Like a tape loop playing over and over in my head. I swear to God, Alice.

Alice is stunned. She can't believe it, doesn't want to believe it. But the conviction in his eyes and his voice override her suspicions.

ALICE
But if who is sending them? And why?

J.J.
Beats me. But whoever it is... I think they're trying to tell us something, before it's too late.

ALICE
(hesitant)
I'm scared, J.J. -- I'm scared and I'm pregnant and that bastard is after the baby.

J.J.
(nods)
I know.

ALICE
I won't let him have it. I'd rather die.

J.J.
No. Don't ever say that, don't even think it. If you give up, he wins.

ALICE
So what do we do?

J.J.
Well, I've been thinking. If what this book says is true, then our dreams are like doorways to the subconscious, right?

ALICE
Yeah...

J.J.
And Freddy comes through that door, right?

ALICE
Yeah...

J.J.
So what if that door swings both ways. I mean, Freddy was alive once, right? Which means he must have dreamt, and that means his dreams must still be out there somewhere, in the dream pool. So maybe we can turn the tables on this creep!

Alice looks at J.J., who smiles that mysterious smile. Slowly, a similar one spreads across Alice's features. She shakes her head.

ALICE
You're a very weird guy, J.J.

J.J.
Yeah, well, you know what they say: when the going gets weird, the weird turn pro.

She smiles a little, then. A fleeting flash of teeth.

J.J.
(beaming)
You smiled! Whaddaya know: our first miracle.

He stands up.

J.J.
(CONT.)
Keep checking, see if you could find some more clues. Let's try to get a fix on this fucker.

Alice nods., as J.J. turns and crosses the room, disappearing into the far stacks.

INT. LIBRARY -- EVENING

Alice searches intently, scanning through reams of useless information. She nod outs momentarily, then snaps back. She rubs her eyes and tries to concentrate.

CLOSE-UP -- MICROFICHE SCREEN

The headlines flash by: NEW VICTIMS FOUND IN SPRINGWOOD SLAYINGS...LOCAL MAN APPREHENDED, CHARGED WITH MURDERS ... JUDGE CALLS MISTRIAL, KILLER GOES FREE...

She sees the photo of young Fred Krueger, emerging from the courthouse, defiantly unrepentant. More headlines. Suddenly her eyes go wide, as she sees the accompanying photo of a woman, being hounded by the press.

The woman looks older, her face tormented and haggard, but there is no mistaking her. It is the woman in Alice's dream. Alice stares at the name under the photo with a mixture of shock and recognition.

ALICE
(to herself)
Amanda... Amanda Krueger...

She looks around for J.J.. Again, he is nowhere to be found. Alice gets up and goes into the far stacks, searching for him.

ALICE
(whispering)
J.J.... J.J., where are you?

INT. THE STACKS -- EVENING

Alice searches, deeper into the rows of books, which get narrower and creepier as she goes.

She rounds a corner and sees a figure standing at the edge of the stacks, watching her. It is the young Amanda Krueger. she holds a swaddling-clotrhed bundle in her arms. The apparition turns without saying a word and disappears around the corner.

ALICE
Wait! Come back!

She rounds the corner and finds herself in THE ORPHANAGE CORRIDOR. It is much like the asylum corridor, a dank and despairing place, reeking of loveless charity and institutional squalor. She hears the wailing of an infant, coming from around the corner. Alice moves toward it hesitantly.

She rounds the corner and finds herself witness to a strange tableau: Amanda Krueger, now Sister Mary Helena, is handing over her infant to the orphanage. The iron-faced MOTHER SUPERIOR takes the child in her arms as the stern, PAUNCHY ADMINISTRATOR presides.

ADMINISTRATOR
Mary Helena, do you hereby freely and totally relenquish all claim to this bastard child?

Amanda's face is a mask of stoic resolve.

AMANDA
I do.

Alice watches as the babe changes hands, sealing its fate. End on shot of heavy door obscuring Amanda's expression as it shuts, while baby Freddy wails like a banshee in the mother superior's arms. The door slams and Alice finds herself in

INT. THE BOILER ROOM -- NIGHTMARE

Freddy is there, tending the fire. He seems a little surprised to see her, and more than a little angry. He stares at her accusingly.

FREDDY
What are you doing? Trying to find out more about me? Spying on my past?

He pauses to stir the flaming things inside the furnace.

FREDDY
(CONT.)
Well, that's fine. We should get to know each other. After all, we'll be spending a lot of time together. A lot of quality time. In the meantime, have a snack.

He reaches into the furnace, pulls out one of Dan's charred and sizzling arms.

FREDDY
(CONT.)
You're eating for two now, you know.

He thrusts the arm into Alice's horrified face. She screams and bats it away. Freddy laughs and takes a bite.

FREDDY
(CONT.)
Mmmmm... there's nothing like home cooking.

Alice turns and starts to run. As she does, leaving the BOILER ROOM and heading into a CORRIDOR that leads to the FOYER of Freddy's HOUSE. Alice runs to the front door and tries to pull it open. It won't budge. She runs into the living room and tries to open the window, when she hears Freddy's diabolical laughter coming from behind her. She turns and Freddy steps forward from the shadows.

FREDDY
(CONT)
Don't care for the cuisine? Suit yourself.
I guess we'll just have to drum up something else to feed Junior.

He gestures with his hand, and the curtains rip away, revealing a view of JEN, NODDING OUT IN HER ROOM. The view is strange, high and skewed. Alice bangs on the window.

ALICE
Oh God, Jen, please wake up...

Freddy whisks her away.

CUT TO:

INT. LIBRARY -- NIGHT

Alice jolts awake, still at her seat in the microfiche room.

ALICE
(CONT.)
...WAKE UP!!

The whole reading room startles at her outburst., more than half of the snoozing occupants lurching out of their seats. She looks down at the microfiche screen.

CLOSE-UP -- SCREEN

A blistering hole opens up right over Freddy's article, as the acetate MELTS from the heat of prolonged exposure. Alice jumps up from her seat, as her memory of the dream comes screaming back to her.

ALICE
Not again! Please god...

Alice runs out of the library, as the microfiche projector starts to smoke and burn.

CUT TO:

INT. JEN'S STUDIO -- NIGHT

Jen is asleep on the bed. Dean is drinking more coffee and reading a magazine. In the living room, a record is playing softly. Suddenly, it starts to skip.

DEAN
God damn...

He gets up with a glance at peaceful Jen, then slips into the other room for just a second. Just as he enters, the DOOR SLAMS SHUT.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Dean jumps, then tries to open the door. He can't. He starts to hammer against it frantically.

DEAN
(shouting)
Jen! Wake up!

CUT TO:

INT. JEN'S DREAM STUDIO -- NIGHT

Jen awakens suddenly to the faint, distant sound of Dean. The room is too bright, and oddly SKEWED: certain objects are larger than they're supposed to be, certain corners of the ceiling are higher and farther away. It's her studio, with all her stuff, but rendered surreal.

Suddenly, the drawing of Freddy's house begins to shimmer with light and subtle movement. Jen watches in awe as an ANIMATED RUSTY THE DOG moves across the illustrated lawn to Freddy's porch.

JEN
(incredulous)
Rusty...?

In the picture, Rusty turns and comes loping toward her, growing larger as he comes, until his animated 3-D SNOOT actually POKES OUT OF THE DRAWING. Then Rusty BARKS, and Jen lets out a nervous laugh of disbelief.

Suddenly, ANIMATED FREDDY emerges behind Rusty; and before Jen can scream, there is the whir and slash of blades, and RUSTY'S SEVERED HEAD comes flying, meat and fur now, into the room. It lands with a bloody splut at her feet.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Dean hears Jen start to scream now. He throws himself against the door, again and again, to no avail.

CUT TO:

INT. JEN'S DREAM STUDIO -- NIGHT

Pandemonium erupts, as all of her artwork comes alive. The BUSTS and SCULPTURES twitch and contort in maddening, mocking LAUGHTER. The paintings swarm with gruesome, hellish images. The massive metal sculpture creaks and shudders, a giant slow to awaken. In the middle of it all, Jen whirls and screams as each new terror confronts her.

Then the POTTER'S WHEEL, gigantic now, begins to spin on its own; and the giant lump of clay it holds is shaped, as if by invisible hands, into a life-sized CLAYMATION FREDDY. Then the wheel stops, and he smiles at her.

FREDDY
Nice piece of work, huh?

He advances toward her, and his face becomes a SHIFTING MONTAGE OF HIDEOUS DEATH'S HEAD IMAGES: Freddy-flesh melting down to skull, splitting apart into a maggoty mass, congealing into goat's head insectoid leering demon thing from the pit and then back to Freddy again, all in the space of seconds.

Behind him, the oversized KILN roars open, churning with flame.

FREDDY
Okay, bitch. Time to burn for your art.

Jen retreats against a stack of crates and boxes, grapples with the top one, pulls out an ACETELYNE TORCH. Suddenly, FREDDY'S ARM STRETCHES across the room, grabbing her by the hair, dragging her horribly forward.

A foot from his face, she fires up the torch. Freddy howls as she MELTS HIS HEAD, and the grip on her falls slack.

Then the METAL SCULPTURE rears up at last, a hideous metal Freddy. He reaches out with his massive claws and slashes the tubing leading to the acetylene tank. The hiss of leaking propane fills the room.

METAL FREDDY
What a gas...

Jen has one second of abject horror before the gas hits the roaring kiln and the room EXPLODES.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

The door blows off its hinges, smashing Dean to the floor, knocking him unconscious.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S CAR -- NIGHT

Alice recoils as JEN'S SOUL registers, audibly screaming, in her womb. She almost loses control of the car, careening up on to the sidewalk and back onto the street again.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S WOMB -- NIGHT

Jen's soul is sucked down by the mutating fetus within.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S CAR -- NIGHT

Alice crumples against the steering wheel, fighting the pain as she hits the gas and speeds toward the apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. JEN AND GINGER'S LIVING ROOM -- NIGHT

Under the burning door, Dean stirs and awakens. He pushes it away, sees Jen's studio in flames.

DEAN

Jen!!

He gets to his feet, and tries to get inside, but the fire is too intense, and it's spreading throughout the apartment, blocking all escape. He staggers to the sole clear window. It's a two-story drop. He picks up a chair and smashes the glass, then clambors out and jumps.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING/STREET -- NIGHT

Dean lands on the pavement badly. He screams and grabs his knee, then limps to his dirt bike and climbs aboard. He tries to kickstart it. The pain jolts through him like a red-hot needle.

DEAN

(hissing)

Ow, shit! C'mon, motherfucker!

He tries again. No good. He jumps off and hobbles down the street, crying out in pain and terror. A car is coming. He tries to flag it down. It whizzes past, missing him by an inch. He almost falls on his bad knee, then drags himself forward.

EXT. STREET CORNER -- NIGHT

Suddenly, DEAN'S FUTURE SELF is there: old, grizzled, drunken and mean. He stares accusingly.

FUTURE DEAN
You're never gonna leave this town, boy.

EXT. ELM STREET -- NIGHT

Dean freaks, starts painfully running. More cars speed past, ignoring him. He runs, almost blinded by tears, until a DARK SHAPE LOOMS before him.

FUTURE DEAN
Never gonna leave...

DEAN
No!

FUTURE DEAN
You gonna die here...

Dean staggers away from the vision, running until the light and heat from the BURNING BUILDING seer into him. Then he pauses, realizing that he's right back where he came from: in front of Jen's apartment.

DEAN
Oh, no...

CUT TO:

INT. BURNING APARTMENT -- NIGHT

Dean cringes as Freddy pulls the door off of him, then kneels in front of him.

FREDDY
You didn't really think you'd get off that easy, did you?

DEAN
NO!!!

FREDDY

Good guess.

(beat)

Here's lookin' at you, kid.

Freddy laughs and rams his blades into Dean's eyes.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Alice's car pulls up in tandem with the first FIRE TRUCK. She starts to get out of the car when DEAN'S SOUL plunges into her.

Alice reels back against the car; and her belly begins to swell horribly. Not massively: just enough to tell that the baby is growing, supernaturally, inside her.

ALICE

(clutching her belly)

Oh, God...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOTEL-- NIGHT

Buddy confers with the producers as they prepare to leave. S.P #2 surreptitiously hands off a small tightly-wrapped package as they shake hands; and as the producers pull away, Buddy hustles back up to the room.

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Ginger lies on her belly on the rumpled bed, nude and barely covered by the sheet. She's obviously been thoroughly auditioned. She stares at the blank screen of the TV in heavy-lidded shock as Buddy slips back in the door.

BUDDY

They loved you, kid. They really did.

He walks over and places the package on the bureau. He is pouring himself a drink from a leftover bottle when Ginger speaks, in a small, flat voice.

GINGER

There isn't going to be a film, is there?

Buddy's glass wavers for a moment on its way to his mouth.

BUDDY
Of course there's going to be a film. I'm your manager, aren't I?

She sighs but does not move. Buddy finishes his drink and pockets the wrapped package. He pours out a pile of powder on the bureau top.

BUDDY
(CONT.)
You're just tired. It's been a big day. Look, I got to go take care of some business. You rest, freshen up, do as much of this as you want. The room's paid for. I'll be back later to pick you up. Okay?

He pauses by the door and clicks on the TV set; MTV comes up on the screen.

BUDDY
(CONT.)
Here, you want to watch the tube, see what's hot? You're gonna be there before you know it.

Ginger says nothing. Her eyes are fluttering, on the verge of blacking out. Buddy walks over to the bed and kisses her on the nape of her neck. She does not move.

BUDDY
You're gonna be a star, kid. Trust me.

Light and shadow play across her face as the door opens and shuts. She listens to his footsteps recede, then lets herself fade away.

Suddenly, someone knocks on the door. The music swells in the background.

CUT TO:

INT. DRESSING ROOM -- DREAM

Ginger opens her eyes. She is in a dressing room, replete with flowers, champagne and a table filled with delectable foods. She sits up, and finds herself no longer nude, but clad in a slinky black leather dress.

The door opens, and a TECHNICIAN comes in. He smiles.

TECHNICIAN
Showtime , Ms. Becker. Right this way.

GINGER
(stunned)
Are you talking to me?

TECHNICIAN
Am I talkin' to you. What a kidder...

Ginger gets up and follows him out, while the Club MTV theme grows louder and louder.

CUT TO:

INT. CLUB MTV -- DREAM

The multi-levelled studio is packed with dancing, hot-looking kids as Ginger enters. On a raised platform above her, DOWNTOWN JULIE BROWN motions her over. Ginger is baffled, but the excitement is taking over; she grins nervously as she climbs onto the platform.

Then the music stops, and a spotlight hits them as JULIE BROWN approaches with the mike.

JULIE BROWN
Ginger, darling! It's so marvellous to see you!

GINGER
It's...it's wonderful to be here!

JULIE
Darling, we've been getting just tons of fan mail, dying to know the secret behind your hot new moves.

GINGER
(getting into it now)
Well, Julie. I think the secret is to not be afraid. Just let the music take you wherever it wants to go, and just...give it everything you've got!

JULIE
Okay! So be a dear, and introduce the next song for us, would you?

GINGER
Sure! This is INXS, with The Devil Inside!

The music starts pumping, and the place begins to kick. The spotlight is still on Ginger as she pulls out all the stops, a blitzkreig of dazzling sensual motion. Once again, the crowd gathers to watch and applaud her moves.

Suddenly, Freddy is there, doing a little shuffling step beside her. She stops, horrified. He tips his hat.

FREDDY
I like the way you shake that thing.
(beat)
Looks like you worked up an appetite, though.

A huge spread of ultra-rich sweets surrounds them: cakes, pies, pastries, mousse. Freddy impales one tasty tidbit on his foreclaw, profers it.

FREDDY
Here. Have a cookie.

Ginger gazes, terrified, at the crowd. They are chanting and clapping in time now, eyes sparkling with cruel merriment.

CROWD
(chanting)
EAT! EAT! EAT! EAT! EAT! EAT! EAT! EAT!

Freddy brings the cookie-claw up to her lips. She closes her mouth and refuses to take it in.

FREDDY
Bet you can't eat just one.

Freddy shoves the cookie into her mouth, until Ginger submits, chewing reluctantly. She swallows, and an immense, cavernous rumbling comes from her belly.

The crowd cheers her on as Ginger BALLOONS GROTESQUELY, and her face begins to CHANGE, sprouting whiskers and wattles, her nose and mouth running together into a grotesque PIG-LIKE SNOUT.

CROWD
DANCE PIGGY DANCE! DANCE PIGGY DANCE!
DANCE PIGGY DANCE! DANCE PIGGY DANCE!

Ginger scrambles pathetically, the buttons popping off her leather dress as she expands, the tears streaming from her bright blue piggy eyes, as the audience pokes and prods her. She fights her way back to the dressing room. She sees herself in the mirror and screams, then runs for the bathroom. When she goes to jam her FAT FINGERS down her throat, they meld into a piggy cloven hoof. She thrusts the hoof in, A BLOOD-RED GEYSER erupts from her mouth.

CUT TO:

INT. MOTEL ROOM -- NIGHT

Ginger violently awakens, choking down a scream. Her vision seems to swim for a moment; then she remembers where she is.

GINGER
Omigod, omigod...

Club MTV is still playing on the tube. Ginger screams and heaves an ashtray at the screen, which explodes in a shower of sparks.

She drapes the sheet around her and sits up. The mound of coke is still on the dresser. She angrily sweeps it off the bureau.

FREDDY (O.S.)
That's right, Ginger. Just say no.

Ginger whirls, and Freddy is there. She steps back, stumbles on the sheet and nearly falls. Freddy catches her by the throat, holds her up.

GINGER
(pleading tearfully)
Please...oh, God, I'll do anything...

FREDDY
(leering)
That's what I hear.

Outside, a Porsche pulls up and parks. A car door slams. Footsteps approach. Ginger tries to break away. No good. Freddy holds her close.

FREDDY
Uh-uh-uh. Wait for your cue.

Buddy walks in the door. Suddenly, all the SHOOTING LIGHTS come on, blinding him. Every CAMERA turns to catch the action.

FREDDY
Showtime, babe.

Freddy spins Ginger around to face the door as Buddy walks in. From Buddy's POV, only Ginger is there, holding her arms out toward him, eyes bulging with fear.

GINGER
(screaming)
BUDDY! NO! DON'T...!!!

BUDDY
Baby, what the hell...?

He comes to her, puts his hands to her waist as she clutches at his shoulders. Then every camera comes alive, clicking and flashing, as Freddy GUTS HER from behind, blood from her midsection spraying all over Buddy. Buddy screams, as Ginger thrashes.

Click. Flash. Click. Flash. Buddy backs away, Ginger sagging into him. He catches her, just as Freddy's INVISIBLE BLADE SLITS HER THROAT. Her head tips back from the raw meat canyon of her severed neck, held by a hinge of skin. Buddy screams again, face covered with blood now. Click. Flash. Click. Flash.

FREDDY

That's a take. Ciao, babes. You're beautiful.

Freddy disappears, one of his claws clattering to the floor: the murder weapon. Buddy rears back, dropping Ginger's dead weight. Outside, the first police sirens can be heard approaching. Flashing red light cuts through the windows.

CUT TO:

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING -- NIGHT

Alice is pressed against the police barricades, watching the firemen battle the fire, when GINGER'S SOUL slams into her, wailing anguish. Alice SCREAMS, her BELLY SWELLING GROTESQUELY to five-month pregnancy size.

She sags against the barricades, begins to black out. A MAN beside her catches her.

MAN

Jesus. You okay?

Alice moans. He hefts her up.

MAN

(shouting)

Hey! Give me a hand here! This lady's sick!

A COP comes over, gives the guy a hand. They bring her around the barricade, lay her down on the pavement. Another cop comes over, kneels in front of her. He puts a hand on her belly. Something violently KICKS, and Alice convulses.

COP # 1

Better get the paramedics over here. Looks like we might have a miscarriage here.

CUT TO:

EXT. AMBULANCE -- NIGHT

Sirens blare, red lights flash as the ambulance barrels toward the hospital.

INT. AMBULANCE -- NIGHT

Alice is strapped down, slipping in and out of consciousness. The pain is obviously excruciating. The conversation of the paramedics who attend her is garbled; she can't understand what they're saying. She is muttering to herself, and crying softly.

ALICE
Please, God, please...ow, OW! Oh, God, please...

Alice blinks, and Freddy's hand is there, massaging her stomach with surprising tenderness. The violent kicking stops. Alice looks up to see him sitting there. His expression is anything but tender.

FREDDY
(bringing a finger to his lips)
Shhhhh. You'll wake Junior.

ALICE
You leave my baby alone!

FREDDY
Don't you worry about the piggy. He's coming along just fine.

ALICE
(straining at her bonds)
God damn you...!

PARAMEDIC # 1 leans over her, going right through the semi-transparent Freddy. For one horrible second, their faces merge.

PARAMEDIC # 1
Shhhhh. Calm down. We're almost there.

Alice lets out a keening trapped-animal whine. Above her, the transluscent Freddy just smiles and smiles.

PARAMEDIC # 2
Do you think we should sedate her?

ALICE
NO! He'll kill it!

PARAMEDIC # 1

Listen. Nobody's trying to hurt your baby.

(smiles)

Don't worry. We'll be there in a second, and everything's going to be okay...

CUT TO:

INT. ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Alice rolls down the corridor on a speeding gurney.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Alice is on the bed, hooked up to various monitoring devices. A very impersonal DR. PICKMAN is looking over her charts, while TWO R.N. NUNS futz with the sonogram screen and fill out forms.

ALICE

You've got to help me!

DR. PICKMAN

(to Alice)

Relax, dear. You appear to have stabilized. All functions are normal. I think the danger has passed. We're going to keep you under observation overnight, so I advise you and get some rest.

(to NURSE # 1)

Can we get the results of that sonogram up here, please?

NURSE # 1

Yes, doctor.

The nurse attenuates the screen, and the image of a perfectly healthy-looking fetus appears.

DR. PICKMAN

Ah, yes. Everything appears to be fine.

Nurse #2 looms over her, clipboard in hand.

NURSE #2

I'll need the name of your obstetrician...

ALICE

I don't have one...

DR. PICKMAN

(taken aback)

Five months on, and you don't have an o.b.?

ALICE

I'm not five months pregnant!

DR. PICKMAN

(condescending)

Well, that's not what Mr. Sonogram says. In fact, it looks like you have twins. See for yourself.

Pickman nods to nurse #1. She turns the screen toward Alice, and Alice reacts in horror to the sight of the HIDEOUS YIN-YANG depicted there: two fetuses curled into each other, one a pulsing, bloated monstrosity feeding on the other, which writhes weakly in its grip.

Pickman moves over and stands beside her bed.

DR. PICKMAN

You see, dear? Nothing to worry about--

Alice smacks him, hard.

ALICE

(shrieking)

You fucker! He's killing it! You've got to stop him!

DR. PICKMAN

She's hysterical. Get me twenty cee-cees of Dembutol, now! And the restraints!

ALICE

No!

PICKMAN

It's just a light sedative, to help calm your nerves.

She tries to get out of the bed, and the nurse #1 pins down, holding her there as nurse #2 returns with the hypo and the restraints. Dr. Pickman looms over her, needle in hand. He hits her up, and Alice goes limp. Nurses #1 and #2 strap her down, as the doctor marks her chart.

PICKMAN

I want her monitored constantly. Is that clear?

NURSE #2

Yes, doctor.

They finish the job, leaving Alice alone in the room, hooked up to a half dozen machines, and an IV drip. She struggles feebly, to no avail. The drug is kicking in; the room is getting hazy. And Alice is totally helpless.

The door opens. A figure comes in. At first, Alice can't tell who it is. Then he closes the door, comes weakly closer, and she sees who it is.

ALICE

J.J.?

He nods, plainly visible now. He looks DISEASED: gaunt, baggy-eyed and frail.

ALICE

J.J. , they hit me up...

J.J.

(cutting in)

I know. You have to stop him.

ALICE

But how...?

J.J.

The answer is in there. In the dream pool.
Believe it.

ALICE
(fading)
J.J....don't leave me...

Alice's eyes flicker shut as J.J. takes her hand, cups it in his own. He appears to be fighting for consciousness, too.

J.J.
I won't. I promise.

Alice drifts away as the sedative finally claims her. As it does, the surface of the bed turns liquid. J.J. holds her hand and watches as she slowly submerges into it. Then her hands slip out of his grasp and out of the restraints, and Alice disappears beneath the surface.

J.J.
We gotta stick together...

Then J.J.'s eyes flutter shut, and he, too, passes out. He collapses to the floor. Pull back to show the video camera trained on her bed.

CUT TO:

NURSE'S STATION -- NIGHT

Nurse #1 does paperwork, while the video monitor shows Alice's sleeping form, alone in the room. The readings from her vital signs start registering deep sleep patterns.

CUT TO:

INT. THE DREAM POOL -- OUTSIDE OF TIME

The sound of syncopated THUNDEROUS BOOMS returns, echoing and unnerving as a gigantic heartbeat.

Alice is sinking in the infinite black water. Suddenly she opens her eyes, and pushes desperately upward toward the surface.

CUT TO:

INT. ORPHANAGE CORRIDOR -- NIGHTMARE

There is a puddle of water on the floor, the syncopated drops striking its surface over and over. Suddenly, an ARM BURSTS FORTH, followed by another. Then Alice's head crests the surface, and she struggles to pull herself out of the pool.

Before her, at the end of the corridor, MARY HELENA is handing the bastard baby Freddy to the Mother Superior. Alice bolts down the corridor. She reaches the end just as Mary Helena is going through the closing door. The Mother Superior is startled when Alice brushes by her and pushes through the doorway in hot pursuit

EXT. ORPHANAGE -- NIGHTMARE

An hellishly overcast sky roils overhead, as the door slams shut behind Alice. She sees Amanda/ Mary Helena hurrying away, across the courtyard. Alice runs after her.

ALICE
(forcefully)
What happens to the baby?

Amanda/Mary Helena continues on, unheeding. Alice overtakes her.

ALICE
God damn it, what happens to the baby?!!

She grabs Amanda roughly by the shoulder and yanks her around. Amanda turns, and suddenly our POV looms in on the sister's eye, disappearing into the blackness of the pupil and leading us into a string of rapidfire memories...

CUT TO:

INT. ORPHANAGE -- NURSERY -- NIGHT

A dozen babies, uncomfortable cribs lined up in rows, cry their hearts out in the darkness of the gray room. Baby Freddy, at the center of the group, is enraged.

CUT TO:

INT. ORPHANAGE -- DORMITORY -- NIGHT

Freddy, age seven, is tormented and beaten by several larger boys. He tries to fight back, can't.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORPHANAGE -- COURTYARD -- DAY

Freddy, age eight, is torturing a cat when a great shadow looms over him.

CUT TO:

INT. ORPHANAGE CORRIDOR -- DAY

Little Freddy is dragged along by the huge, horrible mother superior. She hauls him into a closet and strings him up by his tie, so that only his tippy-toes touch the floor.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
You're a wicked little monster, and you will know the Lord's punishment.

LITTLE FREDDY
(crying, furious)
You go to hell! You're not my mother! You're not...

The door slams shut...

CUT TO:

INT. ORPHANAGE -- BASEMENT -- NIGHT

Freddy, age nine, setting the killing fire to a load of linens.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORPHANAGE -- COURTYARD -- NIGHT

Freddy, smiling as flames lick out through the windows of the burning building and the screams mount inside. He slams the heavy door.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHT

The CAMERA MOVES BACK from the blazing furnace to reveal twenty-seven year old Freddy. He looks sunken-eyed and gristled, but his concentration is immense, almost maniacal.

He is putting the finishing touches on his razored glove. He slips it on and holds it up to the light.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT

A small boy, passing the mouth of the alley, looks up with wide and frightened eyes to see Freddy standing over him. The blades FLASH down.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHT

Freddy tends the burning bones of his victims, replete with little sneakers melting in the fire. His face is aglow in the light from the flames, looking deep in the throes of post-murder depression. Freddy slams the boiler door shut; it becomes the sound of a gavel.

CUT TO:

INT. COURTROOM -- DAY

Freddy's head is bowed as he awaits the court's verdict, but he has a nasty little smile on his face.

JUDGE (O.S.)

...as we are forced to dismiss all charges against the defendant...

He is mobbed by the crowd.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHT

Freddy dies at the hands of the vengeful parents, screaming in agony and hatred as he burns. ZOOM IN on his screaming mouth, disappearing into the blackness, as his scream echoes off.

CUT TO:

EXT. ORPHANAGE -- NIGHTMARE

POV emerges from Sister Mary Helena's pupil. She appears to have aged generations: her skin is mottled, pale; her eyes are flat and haunted. We can see the sorrow etched in that stoic facade, the years of loss and shame and torment. Alice disengages her grip as if releasing a live power line.

Amanda/Mary Helena backs away, her head shaking in desperate denial. Thunder BOOMS in the background as a gale-force wind swells around them.

MARY HELENA

You must understand: he is a spirit of purest evil. He chose the life he lived, just as he always chooses. Only pain can satisfy his needs. He chose me, chose to destroy my life, to make me incapable of loving

MARY HELENA
(CONT.)
him. When I gave him up, all hope for him vanished -- exactly as he wished.
(beat)
It is his wish for you, as well.

ALICE
What are you talking about?

MARY HELENA
You're the key, child. You and the life within you. He doesn't want to kill the baby. He wants to be the baby.
(beat)
He wants to live again. And destroy you in the process. Like he destroyed me.

The storm roars around them now. Amanda starts to turn away. Alice grabs her, yanks her back around.

ALICE
(shouting)
Bullshit! You left him back there! You abandoned him, and now he's after me!

AMANDA
The child was evil!

ALICE
The child was yours!

Amanda freezes, falls silent. Alice's rage is on a very short tether.

ALICE
Where's your responsibility in all this? If you knew the child was evil, why the hell didn't you have it aborted?

AMANDA
I...I couldn't...

ALICE
(enraged)
You couldn't what? Be responsible for his death? You weren't too damned responsible with his life, either! You gave him over to those people...
(pointing at the orphanage)
...and if he wasn't a monster to begin with, they sure as hell turned him into one!

Amanda is beginning to cry; tears crawl down her cracked and ancient face.

AMANDA
I'm sorry...

ALICE
Sorry's not good enough! I need your help!

AMANDA
I can't...!

ALICE
For God's sake, you're his mother! Do something...!

Amanda shakes her head and begins to FADE. Alice grabs for her; her hands go right through the nun's transluscent habit.

ALICE
(screaming)
HELP ME, GOD DAMN YOU...!!!

CUT TO:

INT. THE BOILER ROOM -- NIGHTMARE

Freddy is standing before the roaring furnace when Alice suddenly appears. Pain and uncontainable fury pour off of him in waves. He has never been more frightening, more terrible, than he is at this instant.

FREDDY
(hissing)
So now you know. So fucking what.

Alice backs away as he affixes a new blade to his glove. It clicks home with a metallic snap.

FREDDY

Do you think that's gonna help? Do you really think anything can help you now?

Freddy advances. Alice backs into the catwalk. Freddy SPEEDS UP, in horrible delirium fashion: without breaking into a run or a sweat, every walking step brings him six feet closer. She doesn't get three backwards steps up the catwalk before he is upon her.

ALICE

NO!!!

FREDDY

(mock-tender)

Mom...I can't tell you how long I've been waiting for this.

She struggles against him. It's hopeless. He has her pinned, and he's taking his time, enjoying her terror. He gives her an Eskimo kiss, rubbing his nose against hers and laughing.

ALICE

(screaming in his face)

WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?

Freddy stops, nailing Alice with a look of purest malevolence.

FREDDY

Because this little baby has plans, bitch. Big plans.

(beat)

I'll show you.

He places the palm of his left hand against her belly, and Alice STIFFENS, shuddering as if electrocuted, the world going hot flash WHITE...

CUT TO:

EXT. ELM STREET -- NIGHTMARE

Bodies and parts fly from exploding windows, the bladed baby hand reaching up from the basinet in the center of the street.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP -- ALICE -- NIGHTMARE

She is ancient, haggard, twin to the dead Sister Mary Helena, her flesh moldering and dropping off her skull in sodden chunks.

CUT TO:

EXT. RANDOM CITY STREET -- NIGHTMARE

A dozen screaming men and women are reduced to wet red streamers at once.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP -- FREDDY'S CLAW HAND -- NIGHTMARE

Slashing through the air.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITYSCAPE -- NIGHTMARE

A landscape of dead skyscrapers, stripped of light and life.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP -- ALICE -- NIGHTMARE

Brittle skull collapsing into pumice.

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP -- FREDDY'S CLAW HAND -- NIGHTMARE

Slashing again.

CUT TO:

EXT. EARTH -- IN SPACE -- NIGHTMARE

A lifeless spinning ball of mud, the stars around it winking out.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHTMARE

Freddy and Alice are eye-to-eye as both of them snap out of the vision.

FREDDY

Everything's a circle, Alice. Life and death go 'round and 'round. But every time _I_ go around, I just get stronger and stronger.

(beat)

Time for another spin of the wheel.

Alice struggles, agonized. His hands begin to sizzle against her belly, burning through her shirt. She screams.

FREDDY
Time to go all the way.

Freddy's hand MERGES with the flesh of her belly: sinking in, becoming one. The electrical charge grips them both this time as he begins to FEED HIMSELF into her.

And her belly begins to horribly SWELL.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

Alice cries out, unconscious in her hospital bed, as her belly swells in tandem with her dream self.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHTMARE

Freddy is up to his elbow inside her; she has swollen to full term. We can see him weaken as he drains himself into her, giving himself fully to the baby inside.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM -- NIGHT

NURSE # 1 comes in as Alice begins to convulse. The monitors are going collectively berserk, every meter practically off the chart. The nurse freaks, hollers for help.

The NIGHT INTERN comes running in; he takes one look at Alice and can't believe his eyes. She looks horribly, deathly ill, her features puffy and distorted, her skin mottles and sallow. He puts a hand on her swollen womb; something hideous moves beneath the surface.

INTERN
Jesus God, this woman's going into labor!
(to the nurse)
I want an delivery room prepped, now!

Nurse #1 crosses herself before rushing out the door. The intern places a hand on Alice's forehead, as she CONVULSES again.

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHTMARE

Freddy looks HORRIBLE: anemic and pasty white, his bones and ligaments JUTTING now as he drains away inside her. Alice's convulsions are getting worse; she is clearly dying.

Suddenly, a WHITE-BLUE LIGHT appears: overwhelming the room, filling the air. Freddy whips around, his arm still moored to Alice's body. A HUMAN FIGURE hovers in the air before him.

FEMALE VOICE
Freddy. No.

Freddy gapes as the figure becomes clear. It is Sister Mary Helena, radiant in the light, her ghastly dead features perversely, gloriously aglow.

FREDDY
(shouting)
You! What do you want, bitch?

MARY HELENA
I want my baby back.

Alice's eyes flicker open. She stares, incredulous.

FREDDY
It's too late! You had your chance!

MARY HELENA
I couldn't give you the love you needed. The love that could have saved you.

Freddy trembles, the blue-white light reflecting on his features.

MARY HELENA
I wasn't ready.

Freddy starts to shrink away, terror in his eyes.

MARY HELENA
I'm ready now.

She reaches out to him, and suddenly a horrible, slick UMBILICAL CORD whips out from the gaping chasm in her belly to connect with his NAVEL. Freddy shrieks as it begins to TUG at him. A ghostly INFANT WAIL fills the air.

MARY HELENA
You're my baby. You will always be my baby.

FREDDY
NO! Let go of me!

MARY HELENA
Come to me, Freddy.
(beat)
Come to momma.

The umbilicus begins to DRAG FREDDY FORWARD; his only grip is lost inside Alice's belly. Alice SHRIEKS as his arm begins to painfully inch out of her.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

Alice's gurney races toward the delivery room doors at the far end of the hall. She is moaning and writhing, but still unconscious. The intern and young, intense DR. SCHOW proceed apace, staring disgustedly at Alice's chart.

DR. SCHOW
(incensed)
This chart is worthless! I can't believe this shit!

INTERN
I have no explanations...

DR. SCHOW
Where is that prickless moron, Pickman? I'll feed him his balls, that incompetent hack! This woman is dying, and I don't even know if he got her name right! Damn it!

CUT TO:

INT. BOILER ROOM -- NIGHTMARE

Freddy roars and SLASHES at the cord that drags him. Three curling sections of it splat to the floor. They open into TINY, INFANTILE CRYING MOUTHS, redoubling the cacaphonous wailing.

MORE CORDS emit from Mary Helena then, affixing at his extremities, yanking him forward like a puppet. One last, profoundly thick one whickers back into his belly, flinging him forward. There is a terrible TEARING SOUND as Freddy's hand wrenches loose from Alice's belly, once and for all.

The boiler room itself begins to SHAKE APART: pipes and valves blowing open, spewing out torrents of water and steam. The catwalk shudders and screeches. Chunks of plaster rain down from above.

Mary Helena's BELLY IS OPEN now, like a trap door to another universe. The light is strongest from therein. Freddy is dragged, navel-first, to the lip of the hole. His flesh begins to sizzle and steam in the near-blinding light.

Then his SPINE SNAPS as he WEDGES there, hands and feet jutting and dangling behind him, still horribly screaming. He stares, one last time and upside down, at Alice and all that he has lost. His face is tragic, full of horror and pain.

For a moment, Alice and Mary Helena look into each other's eyes: a final acknowledgement. Mary Helena nods, serene. Her eyes close.

Then Freddy disappears inside her completely, and the white-blue light goes NOVA, blinding and searing. The boiler room COLLAPSES, once and for all, the CATWALK CRASHING DOWN toward Alice's head as we

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL -- DELIVERY ROOM -- NIGHT

Alice awakens on the delivery table: surrounded by nurses, Dr. Schow between her legs. The contractions are less than seconds apart now. Life has become one big contraction. She opens her eyes and yowls at the faces above her.

NURSE # 2

Doctor! She's awake!

DR. SCHOW
Good. Tell her I'm glad she could make it.

Alice looks over at the fetal monitor. On the screen, two sets of heartbeats blip across the screen. Then one of them fades out. She violently wrenches, and it FLATLINES COMPLETELY.

INTERN
We've lost the baby's heartbeat.

ALICE
(moaning)
No...

DR. SCHOW
(unshaken)
We've got ten centimeters.

The doctor stands, locks eyes with Alice. He is in control of the situation, and his look of confidence gets through to her.

DR. SCHOW
I'm going to need your help now. Can you push for me?

She nods, then cries out. He nods; his eyes smile above the surgical mask. Then he crouches between her legs again, vanishing from her sight.

DR. SCHOW
Okay, let's get these little boogers outta here. Push for me. Good. Now do it again.

Alice pushes, the veins standing out on her beet-red face and neck, her eyes bulging. She makes inarticulate animal sounds.

INTERN
(holding her hand tight)
You're almost there. You're doing great...

DR. SCHOW (O.S.)
Yeah, here comes Number One. A little more.
A little more...yes! Yes yes. Look at this pygmy!

Alice looks over her substantially-flattened belly, sees the little red baby dangle upside down as Dr. Schow snips the umbilical cord. The little arms do a brief, tentative flail, and then the first tiny CRIES emit from his mouth.

DR. SCHOW
A tenor. I should have known.

Alice starts to laugh through her hitching breath; a nurse wipes her forehead. She can't take her eyes off the glistening infant, even as a nurse takes him off to be cleaned and swaddled.

DR. SCHOW
(irritated)
There's not another baby in here! Pickman, you hairball! I'll have you filling specimen jars, you little puke!

The intern laughs, still holding her hand. Alice looks up at him and smiles, the chaos receding at last. She is still too fried to speak, but her relief is overwhelming.

NURSE # 2
I've got a little guy here you might like to meet.

The intern lets go of her hand, and Alice reaches up to take her baby in her arms. His little eyes are open. They stare at each other, and then she hugs him tight. Her smile is enormous.

Dr. Schow takes off his mask and smiles.

DR. SCHOW
God, I love this job.

CUT TO:

INT. ALICE'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Alice sits at her desk, reading a hardbound book. The Dream Pool. Suddenly, from the other room, the baby starts to cry.

ALICE
(smiling)
Oh, J.J., honey...

She sets down the book and moves toward the door. Time has passed; she has lost much of her weight, and she looks radiant.

Return to the book, laid open on its pages. The front cover announces its author: Jason Johnson. The back cover has a picture of J.J., in his late twenties. The publishing date is 2013.

CUT TO:

INT. J.J.'S NURSERY -- NIGHT

It's a brightly colored room with toys and mobiles all over the place. Alice enters to see her father holding the baby J.J., comforting the softly-mewling infant.

MR. JOHNSON
(to Alice)
Guess he had a little nightmare.

ALICE
Oh, my.
(to J.J.)
Hey, stranger. Long time no see.

MR. JOHNSON
(gurgling)
That's okay, my widdle biddy buddy. Grampa's gonna take care of you., Yes, he is. Uh-huh...

Alice walks over. extends her arms for receipt of child. Her father shakes his head, adamant. Alice smiles and shrugs, then glances over his shoulder.

On the other side of the crib, the horrible MOTHER SUPERIOR is there, shaking one gnarled and accusatory claw.

MOTHER SUPERIOR
(hissing)
Abomination! The child is evil...

Alice blinks and sucks in air, startled. When she opens her eyes, the nun is gone. Her father isn't paying attention, but J.J.'s cries have resurged anew.

ALICE

Here.

This time, her father agrees, handing over the baby. Alice hugs the boy tight, rocking back and forth, a troubled look in her eyes.

ALICE

I love you, baby.

Over Alice's shoulder, Baby J.J. stares at the camera. Expressionless. Unknowable. Hold on that image, then

FADE TO:

BLACKNESS

And in that blackness, a solitary sound.

ALICE (V.O.)

I love you, baby...

REMAIN IN BLACK.
ROLL CLOSING CREDITS.

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